

February 22, 2012

Appropriations Committee  
State of Connecticut

To whom it may concern,

Good morning, my name is JoAnn Forman and I am a parent of a 28-year-old daughter with developmental disabilities. Her name is Emily Forman, and she has been the recipient of DDS funding since the time of her graduation six years ago. She is currently working at HARC in their supported employment program. My family and I are so grateful for this funding and the support she has received to be able to go to work and be a productive member of society. Frankly, Emily has very few opportunities to live a "near normal" life, and this work experience is certainly one of them.

I am writing because I am unable to attend the public hearing on the budget adjustments proposed for the Department of Developmental Services. I have heard Gov. Malloy speak in the past, and I know he has been a friend and supporter of individuals who are often unable to live and work independently, and more importantly unable to advocate for themselves. My daughter Emily is a delightful young lady who works hard, has a big heart, respects others, and yet has to live a life knowing that she does not have the opportunities that her younger sister has. Without sufficient DDS funding, the opportunities she is awarded now, will be compromised.

As you hear testimony today, please consider the voices of the many children and adults in Connecticut who need you to advocate and support them. I hope at the very least you maintain the current level of support for DDS, and maybe even search deep to find funds to increase that support where it is needed most. I am thankful for the support Emily has received in the past; it is without question essential to her well being and growth that it continue. Good Luck! I know this is a difficult task given the economic times, but please do the right thing and maintain the support that our children need.

With sincere appreciation,

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